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156 609 conditions, singly or in combination, cause the attitude of individuals or groups to differ in degree. As a general rule nomads who range habitually on the fringes of alien civilized areas are more dangerous to encounter than those habitually withdrawn in the wilds. Thus, the northern and western constituents of the great Anazah group are less safe to visit than the Shammar. Other contingent circumstances may make particular groups yet more hostile—if, for example, they range near the political frontier of two alien powers, as do the eastern Sinaitic groups; or in a difficult mountainous country, like the Huweitât and Huteim east and north of Akaba; or where shelter and water can be obtained in hidden rocky recesses, as among the Beni Sakhr in the southern trans-Jordan region; or in insalubrious low-lying tracts such as the Yemen Tihâmah, or the southern part of Hasa, or the eastern part of the south coast, which account for the evil repute of the Zarânik (*Dhawâhiq*), the Ahl Murrah, and the Qara tribes respectively.

Certain of the inland tribes, however, have reputations as bad or worse, and in their case one must look for peculiar causes. The ill fame of some groups of the Harb, for example—of one group especially, the 'Anâ sub-tribe of the Maarûh section—is probably due to temptation long put in their way by the pilgrim routes, where these pass through a lean region debated between two powers. The repute, again, of the Qahtân, reckoned by the popular voice the most savage of Bedouin groups, may be accounted for by their seclusion and isolation along the northern fringe of the impenetrable Southern Desert. It is possible, however, that in both these instances report is worse than fact—in the one, because it is the well-known pilgrim route that has so often suffered, in the other because the northern Bedouins, who chiefly inform European minds, know very little about the group in question. It is common talk, for example, that *some of the Qahtân tribes are cannibal*. On investigation, this imputation is always passed southward to the next group, till it finally fades away into *terra incognita*.

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One word of caution, however, must be uttered about such cut-and-dried tribal reputations. They have not, in some cases, been always the same. The Huteim, for instance, who have a bad name for robbery now, used to be esteemed among the most inoffensive of nomads—almost on a par with the despised but universally tolerated Sulubba. Some one familiar with the desert talk of the moment should always be consulted before the desert itself is entered.

609 577 621 The least suspicious and most trustworthy Bedouins are, naturally, those of the largest and best-knit tribes, especially such as form part of a federation under the central authority of one of the